

that prosecutors have every tool available to punish those who attack the men and women in blue.

Nationwide in 2020, 47 law enforcement officers were killed in the line of duty, and over 300 were shot. Three of those murdered officers were right in my home State of North Carolina. So far in 2021, 14 officers have been killed in the line of duty, and over 50 have been shot. Countless others have been assaulted.

The year 2020 saw the rise of radical ideas like abolishing the police, which fueled distrust and disdain for our brave men and women in blue. Even while Americans of all views are calling for transparency and accountability, the ideas of abolishing and defunding the police only serve to deepen the divide in our country and our communities.

It is sad that Congress even needs to consider a bill to protect law enforcement officers. The heated rhetoric and the violent attacks on officers are having real world impacts beyond just the safety of our law enforcement community. Across the country, recruitments are down and retirements are up. We have cities having to increase funding for recruiting and finding people that will replace those who have left the profession or retired early. This is sad, but it is not surprising. Law enforcement officers put their lives at risk every single day. They leave their spouses and families every morning, and they don't know if they are going to come back.

In 2018, before the antipolice rhetoric took hold, the House passed the legislation by an overwhelming vote of 382 to 35—the bill that I am reintroducing—including 220 Republicans and 162 Democrats. On the floor, every current Member of the House Democratic leadership voted in favor of this legislation, including Speaker PELOSI.

This has been bipartisan legislation, and it should be bipartisan legislation today, which is why I call on all of my colleagues—Members of the Republican caucus and the Democratic caucus—to join us in support of this commonsense and needed legislation.

Congress must pass the Protect and Serve Act right away and boldly say that there is no escape from justice for dangerous criminals who intentionally assault and kill our hard-working, dedicated law enforcement officers.

I urge the American people: Call your Senators. Ask them to support the measure. Tell them that you want this bill passed and our law enforcement officers protected. Don't be silent. Help me fight for the men and women in blue, because they are counting on us. And along the way, when you see a law enforcement officer, thank them for their service and let them know Members of Congress are fighting for them.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Wyoming.

BIDEN ADMINISTRATION

Mr. BARRASSO. Madam President, last month, the American people cre-

ated 379,000 new jobs across our country. The unemployment rate fell to 6.2 percent. Our economy is recovering. We are actually on our way back to normal.

In early February, the Congressional Budget Office published a report on this. The report says that our economy will reach the same size that it was before the pandemic, and it will do it in just a few months. It says this summer our economy will be back to normal.

Now, the CBO made that projection weeks before the Democrats passed and the President signed into law a \$1.9 trillion wish list. In other words, our economy would be back to normal even had they never passed the bill. We would be back to normal without a dime of this incredible high amount of spending.

We didn't need the liberal wish list. The country doesn't need it. Yet it is obvious why Democrats rushed—rushed—their liberal wish list into law. They wanted to stamp their name on the recovery that was coming, no matter what. I have no doubt that that is the goal.

Yet the truth is clear: This is not President Biden's recovery. President Biden inherited three vaccines—successful vaccines, vaccines that work and are safe. President Biden inherited 2 million tests a day for coronavirus. President Biden inherited falling coronavirus numbers. He also inherited a recovering economy.

Last year, we saw the fastest economic recovery in American history. The unemployment rate fell by half in 6 months. The American people created more than 12 million jobs coming back from the pandemic. They did it in just 6 months. That is more jobs than were created in the 8 years of the Obama-Biden administration.

Now, this was in large part because of the foundation laid by Republicans before the pandemic, with President Trump's economic programs in the White House. Republicans cut taxes for the middle class, on job creators. We cut regulations, and we cut government redtape. We made a better trade deal with our neighbors. Our agenda worked.

Just before the pandemic hit, the unemployment rate was down to 3.6 percent. The American people created more than 7 million new jobs under President Trump. We saw record-low unemployment for Hispanic Americans, Asian Americans, and African Americans. We reached the lowest unemployment rate for women in 60 years.

When America began to reopen, the success of that agenda helped us recover at a record pace. The economy is also recovering because we are making progress against the virus.

With Republicans in the White House and a Republican majority in the U.S. Senate, we passed more than \$4 trillion in coronavirus relief. Unlike the Democrats' relief wish list, all five of our bills were bipartisan. They each got 90 votes in the Senate or more.

Operation Warp Speed broke records for vaccine development. A new vaccine typically takes about 10 years from the lab to people's arms. The previous record for a vaccine was for mumps. It took 4 years. Last year, we achieved two coronavirus vaccines in 10 months. We broke records, and it wasn't even close. The Food and Drug Administration made dozens of cuts to regulations in order to make this happen.

The Biden administration has not played it straight with the American people about coronavirus. We remember when Vice President Harris said that there was "no national strategy or plan for vaccinations."

We were delivering millions of doses of vaccines in December. President Biden said: "We got into office and there was nothing in the refrigerator"—"nothing in the refrigerator."

The Biden campaign and now the Biden administration has repeatedly misled the American people on the coronavirus. They have repeatedly taken credit for things for which they deserve no credit.

Mark my words. This summer they are going to try to take credit for our recovery. If they do, they will be flat-out wrong.

Our recovery was booming under the Republican agenda, and it was an agenda of low taxes and fewer regulations. That is the agenda that the American people need to get our economy booming again.

DEMOCRATS' AGENDA

Madam President, on another matter, I also come to the floor to oppose what I see as a radical agenda of the Democrats in Congress.

It has not even been 2 months since the Democrats took over the Senate, and they have already rolled out one of the most leftwing agendas in American history. They have already spent \$1.9 trillion—trillion with a "t"—\$1.9 trillion of our tax dollars. Twenty-six Democrats have endorsed amnesty for illegal immigrants. Nearly every Democrat has endorsed giving statehood to Washington, DC, and now Senator SCHUMER has put gun control on the Senate's to-do list. Democrats have proposed a radical agenda that invades nearly every aspect of American life.

Yet the driving force behind this agenda is not the Senate. It is still the House. House Democrats have gone after our First Amendment right to freedom of religion. They have gone after our Second Amendment right to keep and bear arms. They have gone after our right to work. When Democrats are in charge, none of our rights are safe.

Neither are our most cherished institutions. House Democrats have gone after our police, gone after our elections. They lecture Republicans about accepting the results of elections. Yet they are trying to overturn an election in Iowa.

Now, the lawyer the Democrats have put in charge of that case was just

sanctioned in Federal court on ethics violations. Yet Speaker PELOSI has made it clear at her press conference on Friday that she supports the effort to overturn the election.

That is not all. Democrats aren't just trying to change one election. They are trying to change all of our elections. They have passed a bill to change just about every aspect of our elections forever.

A recent poll by Harvard shows that 71 percent of voters say they don't want future elections to be like they were in 2020. If Democrats get their way, every election will be a pandemic election.

To change our elections, Democrats still need 60 votes in the Senate. That is why over the weekend, Democrats' allies at the New York Times endorsed changing the rules of the Senate. The paper explicitly said that that was the reason. The paper attacked Members of this body—Senator MANCHIN and Senator SINEMA—who have had the courage to oppose changing the rules of the Senate. The editorial board said: "This is a singular moment for American democracy, if Democrats are willing to seize it."

It is dangerous. It is scary. Yet it is true. This is a singular moment. Once they rig the Senate, then they can rig our elections. Once they rig our elections, then there will be nothing to stop them. Then they can go after our religious freedoms. They can go after our rights to keep and bear arms. And they can spend as many of our hard-earned tax dollars as they want.

This certainly is a singular moment for our democracy. It is a moment for Senators on both sides of the aisle to stand up to this radical agenda.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Indiana.

MARCH MADNESS

Mr. YOUNG. Madam President, I rise today to speak about a subject that is a point of pride and a source of passion for my constituents.

Visit Indiana, and you are bound to see them: a backboard hammered to an old barn, rows of asphalt courts in city parks, a lone hoop in front of a cornfield or in a clearing, steel poles standing in driveways.

Though basketball wasn't technically invented in Indiana, Indiana is indeed its epicenter. Even the game's inventor, James Naismith, once said: "Basketball really had its origin in Indiana, which remains the center of the sport."

So it is appropriate that this year's NCAA tournament will be played in its entirety in our State.

Now this, of course, is in part because planning and hosting 68 teams in the middle of a global pandemic presents unprecedented challenges, challenges that Hoosiers in and around Indianapolis are going to be able to navigate. And they will be able to work their world-class college campuses in order to host teams from around the country. It is a great source of pride for us.

But it is also fitting because this sport is so important to our State. You see, it is March Madness meets Hoosier Hysteria. The gyms where we play basketball are historic sites. The men and women who have competed and coached back home are Indiana folk heroes. We know their names. They are part of our common language: The Big O, Catch, the General, Bird, Wooden.

Memorabilia, artifacts, and sites associated with them are preserved in museums and townhalls. They are in school gyms. They are marked by bronze plaques and other ways to memorialize those who have preceded us. Streets and roads are named in their honor. We can even identify legendary teams and major moments in our basketball history with just a few almost mythic words that are familiar to the ears of Hoosiers: "Franklin Wonder Five," "Plump's last shot," "8 points in 9 seconds," and, yes, the infamous "chair throw."

Even the color of the ball—orange, of course—can be traced back to a Hoosier, Tony Hinkle, who thought it was a good idea.

For Indiana, basketball is much more than just a pastime. It is a source of joy. It is a source of joy for our communities, and it brings the people in and across them together. After all, it takes little more than a basket and a ball to play.

That is why wherever you go in Indiana and no matter the neighborhood you might be visiting or passing by, be it affluent or hit by hard times, in the country or in the city, you are going to see basketball played. It almost doesn't matter what the time of year it is or what the weather is like, you are likely to see basketball if you hit the road for a few hours in Indiana at any given time of year. You are going to hear it discussed. The basketball court and the gymnasium bleachers are great levelers.

I am sharing this with you because there is a larger point at play. Today, it increasingly seems that Americans have less and less in common with one another; that we are defining ourselves not as a diverse nation united by a common set of values with a shared past and a shared future, but we are instead sorting ourselves into tribes based on geography or class or even political affiliation. This has been accompanied by the hollowing out of many of our communities and a loss of faith in the public spaces and access to these public spaces and institutions that shape our national identity and bind this vast, pluralistic, and beautiful country together.

Now, these are dangerous trends, this separation, this tribalism; ones that we are going to have to work hard to turn back. There is only so much this body can do—I am under no illusions—there is only so much government can do to make America whole again.

That is why we should cherish and celebrate the institutions that do have the power to unite us. And, as any Hoo-

sier will tell you, basketball is one of them.

Even beyond this, as its history in Indiana shows, this shared ritual that brings us joy and brings us together also pushes us to be better individually and collectively.

I think of the persistence of a teenager by the name of Steve Alford, endlessly practicing free throws in his driveway in New Castle, even in the snow and rain; and the courage of Indiana University's Bill Garrett, who fought segregation and broke the Big Ten color barrier; and then the faith of Little Milan High, enrollment hardly 100, beating mighty Muncie Central, enrollment over 1,000, for the 1954 State high school championship; the grace of successive generations of graduates at Crispus Attucks. Now, this is a high school built to segregate Black students in Indianapolis, but it then grew into an academic and athletic powerhouse whose basketball program was a beacon in the civil rights movement and, to this day, remains a great source of pride not just for Black Hoosiers but for all Hoosiers. It was also the first African-American team to win a State championship in the Nation; the spirit of the tiny town of Medora, an underdog community featured in a recent documentary, who stood by their team while its players laced up work boots because they couldn't afford basketball shoes. Then they set out with grit and determination and resolve to end a season losing streak.

So these scenes from Indiana's history, up to the present day, like the game itself, unite people from different backgrounds, and they foster pride in our places, especially our struggling places. They teach us to draw a line between competition and contempt, to keep perspective and to have the humility to remember that defeat is never permanent and neither is victory. They help us see and treasure what we have in common. They show us the power of opportunity and empowerment.

Institutions like basketball can't be taken for granted. They bring meaning and purpose into the lives of people and places that we call home. They encourage our citizens to dream beyond limit, and I would say that they are what we need in this Nation right now.

So as the NCAA tournament tips off and the games begin across our stadiums, field houses, and arenas, Indiana's hardwood civic temples, as we like to think of them, I know will be a reflection for our love for basketball and an exhibition of our collaborative ability to host such a large event during such a difficult time.

But what will also be on display is the other reason it is right and proper that this event takes place in Indiana. We are devoted to this sport because it brings us hope, and it brings us together. It instills the virtues necessary to preserve many of the other features that make our country so special. It really can help make America whole again.